



# SEA AIRPORT'S SUSTAINABLE AIRPORT MASTER PLAN (SAMP) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## GENERAL

### 1. WHAT IS THE SUSTAINABLE AIRPORT MASTER PLAN?

The Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP) is the blueprint for changes at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) to meet future, forecasted demand. The master plan process was completed in 2018. SAMP identified 31 Near-Term Projects (NTPs) that are intended to serve 56 million annual passengers as well as flights and cargo activity at an optimal level of service, as defined by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

Currently, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental review is underway, with the draft NEPA document expected to be released in fall 2024. Once the NEPA process is complete, the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review will follow.

### 2. WHAT ARE THE PROJECTS BEING PROPOSED?

Key elements of the NTPs (i.e., Proposed Action) include construction of a second terminal, a centralized maintenance campus, off-airport cargo handling facilities, realignment of airport roadways, and expansion of the fueling facilities. Highlights include:

- A second terminal with 19 additional gates
- An elevated busway and stations linking the existing rental car facility, new terminal, and main terminal
- Cargo facilities to replace current facilities and to accommodate air freight
- Realigning airport roadways
- Airfield updates to improve safety and efficiency
- New parking infrastructure to serve the second terminal
- Additional facilities for sustainable aviation fuel

### 3. WHY EXPAND SEA?

A Regional Aviation Baseline Study conducted in 2021 by the Puget Sound Regional Council found that, based on forecasted demand, there will be 27 million more passenger boardings per year than SEA can accommodate at an optimal level of service by 2050. Without new facilities for future projected demand, congestion at SEA will increase, causing additional delays and a worsening level of service.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

### 1. WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW?

The purpose of an environmental review is to assess the potential environmental effects of a proposed project before it is undertaken. Key objectives include:

- Informed decision-making
- Full transparency and public engagement in the decision-making process
- Compliance with laws and regulations
- Identification of ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts

## 2. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NEPA AND SEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, is a federal policy requiring federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions and provide opportunities for public input. The Federal Aviation Administration is the lead agency for NEPA.

The State Environmental Policy Act, or SEPA, requires agencies at the state level to do the same. Following the NEPA EA, the Port will be undertaking a separate environmental review under SEPA. The Port of Seattle is the lead agency for SEPA, per state law.

## 3. WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)?

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is prepared to determine if a federal action will have significant impacts. Any action that is not categorically excluded and does not require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), has impacts that are uncertain, or has unresolved environmental issues, requires preparation of an EA.

## 4. HOW CAN I COMMENT ON THE DRAFT EA?

Commenting on a draft EA is an important way for the public to participate in the environmental review process and contribute to the decision-making process. The Port is committed to an accessible, understandable public comment process. Once the public comment period opens in late fall 2024, members of the community and other interested parties will be able to review information translated into six languages and submit comments throughout the comment period at a public meeting, online, by email, or regular mail. The document will be available on our website and at public libraries in Burien, Des Moines, and SeaTac. Comments should provide sufficient detail for the agency to understand the commenter's position and why the issues raised are important to the decision-making process.

## 5. HOW LONG WILL THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD BE?

The FAA has confirmed a 45-day comment period, which is an extension to the standard 30-day public comment period length for a NEPA EA.

## 6. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT MY COMMENT?

At the conclusion of the comment period, all comments received will be reviewed and taken into consideration by the FAA and the Port during the preparation of the final EA. Responses to comments will be included in the final EA.

## 7. HOW ARE YOU ENGAGING COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS?

The public engagement effort involves several key strategies to ensure transparency, inclusiveness, and meaningful participation. These include public meetings, stakeholder engagement, open comment periods, and translation and accessibility at key project milestones. Once the public comment period opens on October 21, 2024, members of the public will be able to review information translated into six languages and submit comments throughout the comment period at a public meeting, online, by email, or regular mail. The document will be available on our website and at public libraries in Burien, Des Moines, and SeaTac.

## 8. HOW CAN I LEARN MORE AND STAY UPDATED ON THE SAMP ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS?

To learn more, visit our project website at [www.sampntpenvironmentalreview.org](http://www.sampntpenvironmentalreview.org). You can also register to receive emails to stay updated throughout the environmental review of the SAMP Near-Term Projects by selecting the Sustainable Airport Master Plan notifications box underneath the "Environment and Sustainability News" section on our subscribe page. <https://subscribe.portseattle.org/publications>

